

The Daily Charge

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Operation Iraqi Freedom II

"Telling the First Team's Story"

Saturday, April 10, 2004

IEDs Can't Keep 1-8 Cav Down

By Cpl. Bill Putnam
122nd MPAD

CAMP FERRIN-HUGGINS- April 2 will probably be a day Spc. Timothy Briggs never forgets.

During a late morning patrol, Briggs and his squad mates from Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, were heading east of their base camp when their up-armored Humvee was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED).

Riding in the gun turret, Briggs took two pieces of shrapnel in his right arm. His hearing, like everyone else's in the vehicle was jarred as well.

Briggs, a Little Rock, Ark. native and an Abrams tank crewman, is happy to be alive. Manning the Humvee's turret, Briggs' vehicle crossed a bridge and moved approxi-

mately 500 meters when it was hit.

The next thing he knew, he heard a big explosion, was surrounded by dust and his ears were ringing.

"I couldn't see anything after that, so I dropped back down into the vehicle," he said. Even then he didn't know he was hit, and the crew didn't know how badly the vehicle was damaged.

They drove another 200 meters and stopped to assess the situation. It was there while pulling security that Briggs realized he was hit.

"I felt something running down my arm and saw that it was blood," he said.

After towing the vehicle to a more secure location, Briggs was evacuated to a combat support hospital, treated and returned to duty the next day. He said the shrapnel



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Charles Kennedy, Spc. Timothy Briggs and Staff Sgt. Wendell Freeman talk about the Improvised Explosive Device that wounded Briggs and damaged the up-armored Humvee behind them.

is still in his arm and his ears still ring.

But the vehicle took the worst of it. The bomb caused extensive damage to the Humvee. The radiator was shredded, the two front tires were blown up, the side-view

mirrors and windshield were shattered and the hood was pockmarked with shrapnel.

Amazingly, despite the damage, the mechanics of 1-8 Cav. and Company C, 515th FSB, repaired the stricken

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Civil Affairs Works to Clean Up Al Rashid Market

By Cpl. Bill Putnam
122nd MPAD

One of the long-term projects Maj. Robert Dixon has on his plate isn't too much of a stretch from his civilian job back in Tennessee. Eventually his latest project will turn into work for a local contractor helping to alleviate the rampant unemployment rate in this district.

Dixon, a project planner in Company A, 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, is an environmental assessor back home. His

job is to make sure major projects, like the district sewage system, don't pollute the environment.

Right now he's working to install a large sewage "lagoon" near the Al Rashid District market, not far from Camp Ferrin-Huggins, the home of the 1st Cavalry Division's 5th Brigade Combat Team.

In the meantime, something has to be done so the infrastructure doesn't fall down around the people, he said.

"These things are not major fixes; they're small fixes

that help the community hang in there until the big things can be done," Dixon said.

Right now the main sewage line running through the market is broken and blocked. It floods and the ground around the market is black, mushy mud that reeks horribly. A local fish farm adds to the muck by dumping almost 20,000 gallons of sewage into the area as well.

"It comes out of the manhole and spills out into the market," Dixon said.

The sewage main can't be

fixed yet. But for \$11,000, a 40-foot by 60-foot lagoon will be built behind the market to handle the smelly overflow.

The new lagoon will lessen the sewage problem and also give shop owners and residents a clean market, Dixon added.

Once the planning and engineering is sorted out, the project will go to the weekly contractor's bidding conference on Camp Ferrin-Huggins. The chosen contractor will, in turn, hire people to complete the work, injecting more money into the local economy.

Spur The Moment

How Are You Acclimating to Life in Baghdad?

I'm getting used to the way stuff is running, but I miss my wife and son. So, I guess I'm pretty good with how stuff's going right now I'd just rather be at home.



SPC David McSwain
HHC 382 FSB

The culture is different. Seeing the way these people live . . . and seeing how they deal with everyday life is a dramatic change.



SPC Donald Simms
HHC 1BCT

I'm getting used to it pretty well, including the Iraqi food I've been eating. After a few more Pepto-Bismols I'll really be acclimated.



CPT Joseph James
2-12 CAV

This is my second time around, so it's pretty easy to acclimate to the weather and things like that. So, I'm doing pretty good.



SGT Darius Galbreath
91 ENG BDE

Quick Overhaul Humvee Repairs Set Record

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vehicle in six hours and had it back on the road the next day.

As it was being towed back in to the battalion's motor pool, Sgt. Joshua T. Shaw, a mechanic in Charlie Company, 515th FSB, saw the damage.

He said to himself, "The game is real for us over here."

Everything Shaw had been told to expect about Iraq, IEDs and wounded Soldiers, during his train-up time at Fort Hood was proving to be true.

"It brought it a little closer to home that way," Shaw said.

Out of all that damage, Shaw said, the radiator was the most time consuming. It took about two hours to replace it. Several parts surrounding it had to be removed before the radiator could be taken out.

There's a lot more work to do on an up-armored Humvee than a standard one.

"There are a lot of added parts," Staff Sgt. David Landry said. Mechanics have to work around and through more parts in an up-armored Humvee than a regular one, the Beaumont, Texas native explained. Even the front end of an up-armored Humvee is

built differently, he added.

Shaw said the repair of Briggs' vehicle is a record so far.

"I guess we're going to try and set a new one," Shaw said.

After the repairs are done, the mechanics will run the vehicle for an hour to test for leaks and to make sure the new parts work, Landry said. Then it's sent out on a road test.

"We don't want these guys going out in something we fixed and find out it wasn't fixed," Landry said.

The Soldiers patrolling the streets of Baghdad appreciate their mechanics' attention to detail. Briggs said he was impressed when he found out the vehicle was back on the road.

"If you would've seen it, it was really messed up," Briggs said. "You've got to love those up-armoreds."

Two days after the IED wounded him and severely damaged his vehicle Briggs maintained a sense of humor about it.

"I'm gonna take a little bit of Iraq home with me," he said. "My wife's gonna love that."



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Fort Hood Sentinel

Children at Fort Hood's Apache Arts and Crafts Center meet the Easter Bunny during the 2nd Annual Spring Easter Festival. The kids decorated ceramic eggs and posed for photos with the Easter Bunny.

Apache Easter Festival Paints Memories

► From *Fort Hood Sentinel*

FORT HOOD, Texas- Concentrating intently, Alex Macomber dipped his brush in the paint and applied it to the ceramic egg in his hand.

Sitting next to him, his siblings, Andy and Angela painted their own eggs with similar intensity.

The children were at the Spring Easter Festival at the Apache Arts and Crafts Center, painting ceramic eggs to show their father for his Easter weekend return.

"My husband is going to be home for R & R this Easter,

and they'll be able to share this with him," their mother Heather Macomber said. "I don't really care as much about Christmas, the real holiday for us is Easter, so it's good that he gets to be home at this time."

The Spring Easter Festival at the Apache Arts and Crafts Center featured ceramic eggs for children of any age to make and decorate. The Easter Bunny graced the fest with his presence, and interested participants had the option of having their photo taken with him. Photos with the Easter Bunny were either framed or put on a mug.

Commander Thanks Area For Support During Loss

► From *Killeen Daily Herald*

FORT HOOD, Texas- The 1st Cavalry Division's rear detachment commander thanked this central Texas post and civilian community for coming to the aid of the division's 57 families who had Soldiers killed or wounded this week in Iraq.

"We've just gotten outstanding support from the Fort Hood installation," said Lt. Col. Bob Forrester during a news conference Thursday outside the post's main gate. "They've provided us tremendous support in terms of additional resources, additional chaplains additional counselors, and we've gotten all the support we've needed for this particular instance."

The Fort Hood-based division lost seven Soldiers Sunday and another 49 were wounded during a fierce firefight in Sadr City, an impoverished Baghdad

neighborhood named after the father of Muqtada al-Sadr, the radical Shiite cleric whose militia is believed behind the violence. The eighth Soldier died Tuesday while on patrol in Ashula.

"The First Team family suffered a great loss this past week with the passing of our Soldiers in heavy action in Baghdad," Forrester said. "On behalf of Major General (Pete) Chiarelli and the Soldiers and the families of the First Team here at Fort Hood, we just want to extend our condolences and our deepest, sincerest sympathies to the families who have suffered loss this past week." Forrester said the families of the 49 wounded had been notified.

In an earlier interview from Baghdad, Chiarelli said many of the wounded had been treated and released for minor shrapnel injuries.

"We are putting our arms around and embracing those families just the same as we are

of our eight (casualties),"

Forrester said. "They are getting the same level of support and counseling."

Sunday's toll was the worst since the start of Fort Hood's involvement in Iraq last year.

Forrester said the numbers had put a strain on the post's counseling services. However, he noted the division also had received significant aid from the civilian community.

"This event has galvanized their support and it's reinforced

everything we've known about the love and the close feeling and the ties that the central Texas family has for the 1st Cavalry Division," Forrester said.

In addition to chaplains, health-care providers and counselors, Forrester said the division's family readiness groups, made up of the units' spouses, also were doing their part.

They "are groups of caring and trained professionals, spouses, volunteers who are doing the daily work of providing child care where it is needed or just sitting up with a grieving family or a grieving friend, providing meals and bringing it over," Forrester said.

Extensive predeployment preparation helped the division's leaders, Soldiers and families deal with this week's tragedy, Forrester said. "I'm not sure you ever can pre-

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Today in History

April 10

► From historychannel.com

1906 *The Gift of the Magi* is published

1919 Zapata assassinated in Mexico

1941 Croatia declares independence

1970 McCartney announces Beatles breakup

1970 Poll reveals that approval of Vietnam is down

1971 U.S. table tennis team visits communist China

In Cav History

1942 Bataan Death March begins.

1951 All Division units except 7th Cavalry Regiment were relieved by the 1st Marine Division.

1968 The 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment recaptures the Special Forces camp at Lang Vei.

Commander Says 1st Cavalry Soldiers Will Continue To Train

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pare anybody for an event like this when it happens," Forrester said. "Based upon the actions that I've observed as the rear detachment commander over the past week, we've done a good job of training those support groups and having the support structure in place to deal with a situation like this. "Morale in Baghdad remains high," Forrester said. "Morale of our families back here remains very high."

Forrester would not comment on the division's plans to

respond to what appears to be a growing threat in Baghdad; however, he did note that incoming Soldiers will go through a certification process before they are allowed to patrol the streets of the Iraqi capital city.

"I guess the point I would leave you with is the training that we've done over the past six months ... it's something you never stop doing," Forrester said. "It's something we'll go back and revisit. We'll modify it as necessary but we'll continue training."

TV GUIDE	AFN ATLANTIC	AFN PACIFIC	AFN Sports	AFN Spectrum
18:00	Law & Order	Saturday Night Live 17:30	Totally NASCAR/ Wire to Wire 18:30	What Dreams May Come 17:00
19:00	Headline News Navy/Marine Corps News	Kickin' It	Sportscenter	The View
20:00	Sportscenter	Best Damn Sports Show Period	NHL 2Night/ NBA - Sacramento Kings @Phoenix	What Not to Wear
21:00	Sports Special/ PGA Tour 21:30	NHL Playoffs - 1st round Gm 2: Montreal Canadiens @	Suns	A Candy Unwrapped
22:00	PGA Tour	Boston Bruins	ESPNNews 10:30	Trading Spaces

Scores



MLB:

Texas Rangers 12
Anaheim Angels 4

Toronto Blue Jays 10
Boston Red Sox 5

Chicago White Sox 9
New York Yankees 3

Houston Astros 13
Milwaukee Brewers 7

NHL:

